

Iowa Mission District

Luke 14:1-14, Hebrews 13:1-17, Psalm 131, Proverbs 25:2-10

*On the Imitation Faith*

I. INTRODUCTION: GRACE, MERCY, AND PEACE....

A. I WAS READING THROUGH THE APPOINTED LESSONS AND PRAYING FOR SOME DIVINE GUIDANCE...

WHAT SHOULD I SAY?

WHERE IS GOD SPEAKING?

WHICH LESSON SHOULD I FOCUS ON?

EACH OF THE LESSONS IS RICH....FULL OF PREACHING POSSIBILITIES...

*The Gospel → Kingdom Etiquette... Don't try to look like a Big Shot..*

B. BUT.... I THEN I READ OUR SECOND LESSON....AND ONE VERSE IN PARTICULAR STRUCK ME...

*Be humble...  
Let G-d be G-d  
you be faithful*

HEBREWS 13:7:

“REMEMBER YOUR LEADERS, THOSE WHO SPOKE TO YOU THE WORD OF GOD. CONSIDER THE OUTCOME OF THEIR WAY OF LIFE, AND IMITATE THEIR FAITH.”

WOW.

D. SO, LET'S FOCUS ON FAITH "AND" IMITATING FAITH....  
NOT IMITATION FAITH!...THAT'S LIKE IMITATION  
FLAVORING... I WANT THE REAL STUFF...

BUT WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO IMITATE FAITH?

WHOSE FAITH SHOULD WE IMITATE?

AND WHAT ABOUT CONSIDERING THE "OUTCOME" OF A  
LIFE OF FAITH?

E. MOST OF US....MYSELF INCLUDED.... WOULD BE RETICENT  
TO SAY, "IMITATE ME."

BUT NOT PAUL.

I

SO....FIRST, LET'S THINK FIRST ABOUT FAITH...

WHAT IS FAITH?

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I KNOW THE NAMES OF HER PARENTS AND SIBLING...

I KNOW WHAT KIND OF BOOKS SHE LIKES TO READ...

AND... I HAVE HER PHONE NUMBER.....MEMORIZED.

MAYBE I SHOULD PUT ALL THAT IN A CARD FOR VALENTINE'S DAY?

WHAT'S MISSING?

PASSION.

C. FAITH (LIKE MARRIAGE) HAS SOME PASSION TO IT.... I DON'T  
MEAN JUST SEXUAL PASSION ALTHOUGH THAT IS PART OF IT...

PASSION MEANS SUFFERING.... THE "PASSION" OF CHRIST...

....WE SUFFER TOGETHER... How Romantic!

WE SHARE THE SAME SENSE OF WHAT IS REALLY IMPORTANT IN  
LIFE...

WE BELIEVE THAT THERE IS MEANING AND PURPOSE IN OUR LIFE  
TOGETHER...

THERE'S A PASSION TO BE THERE FOR ANOTHER PERSON....NO  
MATTER WHAT.....

THERE IS INTIMACY IN OUR MARRIAGE.....

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G. OKAY....I SAW THAT THAT EYEROLL.... I KNOW THAT MARRIAGE IS ALSO DOING THE DISHES.... I KNOW THAT THERE ARE MUNDANE ASPECTS OF MARRIAGE AND FAITH...

9 I KNOW THAT MOST OF THE TIME....FAITH IS GOING TO CHURCH EVEN WHEN WE DON'T PARTICULARLY FEEL ALL THAT PASSIONATE ABOUT IT....

~ THAT....OUR PRAYERS ARE OFTEN COLD.....SOMETIMES FILLED WITH DOUBT....

3 I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO ATTEND LONG CHURCH COUNCIL MEETINGS.....WHERE PASSIONS SOMETIMES RUN HIGH...IN THE WORST WAY....

I KNOW.... BUT IT IS THE PASSION THAT SUSTAINS US...

FAITH – LIKE LOVE - CAN NEVER BE COMPLETELY DEVOID OF PASSION AND INTIMACY...

H. IN OTHER WORDS, FAITH CANNOT BE REDUCED TO JUST KNOWING THE FACTS....LIKE JOE FRIDAY....ON THE OLD TV SERIES DRAGNET.

"JUST THE FACTS" ....

RECITING THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE CAN BE DONE WITHOUT ANY FAITH. \_\_\_\_\_

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C. BEFORE WE GO THERE...HOW MANY OF YOU KNOW  
BONHOEFFER'S WORK  
*THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP...?*

IN GERMAN...THE TITLE OF THAT WORK IS SIMPLY *NACHFOLGE....TO FOLLOW AFTER...*

SO...WHAT WORD DO YOU THINK LUTHER USED TO TRANSLATE  
"IMITATE"?

SURPRISE! IT'S *NACHFOLGE*.

"FOLLOW AFTER" THE FAITH OF YOUR LEADERS.....THIS IS WHAT IT  
MEANS TO IMITATE THE FAITH OF THOSE WHO SPOKE GOD'S WORD TO  
US.

IN OTHER WORDS.... THE LEADERS WE ARE CALLED TO  
IMITATE ARE LEADERS WHO ARE DISCIPLES.

FAITHFUL LEADERSHIP IS DISCIPLESHIP....AND ALL TRUE  
LEADERS ARE TRUE DISCIPLES.

#### IV. THE OUTCOME OF FAITH

##### A. SO:

1. REMEMBER (!)...THAT'S A COMMAND...
2. REMEMBER YOUR LEADERS...THOSE WHO SPOKE GOD'S WORD TO US....THOSE WHO HAD A PASSIONATE INTIMACY WITH CHRIST JESUS....AND WERE WILLING TO TALK ABOUT IT!
3. "AND CONSIDER THE OUTCOME OF THEIR WAY OF LIFE" ....

B. IT SEEMS TO ME, THAT THE OUTCOME OF A LIFE OF FAITH IS OFTEN A CRUCIFIXION.

WHY BE A DISCIPLE OF THE CRUCIFIED?

BUT, I DON'T THINK THAT'S WHERE THE AUTHOR OF HEBREWS (whoever it was!)....WAS GOING....

WHAT IS THE OUTCOME OF A LIFE OF FAITH?

Consider those who were lost...

but Jesus found them ... dead... but Jesus  
save their life

E. CONSIDER THOSE WHO LIVED AND DIED.... IN THE BLESSED  
HOPE.... CONFIDENT IN THEIR FAITH...

sinner...

THAT JESUS CHRIST IS TRUE....

Forgiveness

F. CONSIDER THOSE.... LIKE ALL OF YOU.... WHO COULD HAVE  
LOTS OF OTHER THINGS.... GOOD THINGS.... THAT YOU  
COULD HAVE DONE ON A SATURDAY...

CONSIDER THOSE.... WHO HAVE REMAINED DISCIPLES OF CHRIST  
JESUS....

CONSIDER THOSE WHO SPOKE GOD'S PROMISES TO US WHEN  
EVERYTHING FELL APART.....

CONSIDER THOSE WHO SAID, "I FORGIVE YOU.... I LOVE YOU.... I AM  
WITH YOU... I AM PRAYING FOR YOU..."

CONSIDER THOSE SAINTS.... WITHOUT WHOM YOU MAY NOT BE HERE...

CONSIDER WHERE WE WOULD BE WITHOUT THOSE PEOPLE...

AND IMITATE THEIR FAITH. nachfolge

"REMEMBER YOUR LEADERS, THOSE WHO SPOKE TO YOU THE WORD  
OF GOD. CONSIDER THE OUTCOME OF THEIR WAY OF LIFE, AND  
IMITATE [nachfolge] THEIR FAITH."

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